C.1

432 - 14 St. S.
Lethbridge, Alberta.
Norman MacLeod.

BILL GLADSTONE

No one knows when Bill arrived here. He said he came to Edmonton years ago and deserted from the Company there.

As the saying goes, "He was here when Chief Mountain was a hole in the ground". He built Fort Whoop for Hamilton and Healy and when I arrived at Macleod owned a carpenter shop and house which he sold to Jim Scott when he and Sam Sharp lost the Indian Department cattle herd (later sold to the Alberta Ranch).

He later settled at Mountain Mill and when Louis Garnett married an English wife, built them a nice house and always had Saturday dinner with them. He was always a little careless, so Mrs. G. bought a cuspitor and was looked (sic) for him.

After dinner Glad looked at the fireplace and set his sights--to the right there was the d....d C--then to the left (Mrs. G. had shifted it) then back to the right again--the same result: Glad: "If you don't take that d..d thing away I'll spit in it."

The Rocky Mountain Echo

Pincher Creek, Alberta.

July 21, 1903

LIFE OF AN OLD TIMER--W.S. GLADSTONE.

This year the ice broke up 10 days earlier than last. On the 21st of April when the river began to clear, five of us were sent with one of the boats to a pinery, one day's trip down stream, where we were set to work at digging roots to be used for the ribs of the boats that would be built during the summer at Edmonton. Mr. Harrott with four men left in another boat at the same time but he went on to Edmonton. We remained at the pine forest until the 6th of May, when on being joined by the rest of the boats from Rocky Mountain House the whole flotilla proceeded to Edmonton arriving the next day. The spring bustle of preparation for the journey to York Factory was at its height. I was one of a party told off to go to Fort Pitt and bring back our boss, One-pound one's son. I did not care much for the trip but of course did as I was ordered. On the twelfth of May we started and made the Fort in seven days. I soon found out what I was taken along for. The boss had four forty gallon barrels of rum to cache and did not want any of the men who were to remain at Fort Pitt for the summer to know the hiding place. I dug away all night and by morning had a grave big enough to bury the liquor in. I called the boss who came with another man and we took the rum from the store and solemnly buried it. Then the boss threatened to kill us if we revealed the

fearsome secret to any of the men at the fort. He was so fierce about it that we were almost too scared to utter our promise to be tongue tied. That same day we started with six carts on the return trip to Edmonton. The boss had his wife with him and the carts were loaded with valuable goods for trade. He was to take charge of the Edmonton Post. It was a great country for game at that time and we killed plenty of Red Deer and Antelope on the way. It took us ten days to make the trip. It was my fate to spend another summer in Edmonton. They s t me to work in the boat-yard which suited me first-rate. I preferred boat making to hay-making, rain or shine. About the 20th of July a band of Indians came to the fort to trade. I had never seen any of them before and I was told that this was their first visit to Edmonton. Some of them were South Peigans, some "Big Butte" Indians from the valley of the Arkansas. An advance party came to tell us that the main body would soon follow. Then commenced great preparation to receive them in which we all shared. Some of us hauled water and mixed it with the rum and others got out the bludderbusses (most alarming looking affairs with great bell mouths) and mounted them on the walls and our one cannon was dragged out and loaded in case of trouble and we took care to lay in a good supply of water for emergencies. On the fourth day they came. There were 1000 of them and when they had made campe, each chief at the head of his tribe marched up to the gate where the boss and his interpreter and all of the rest of us stood with guns in our hands. The chiefs shook hands with the boss and by

way of salute the Indians discharged their firearms, we returning the compliment. Then the red men filed into the Indian house and the fun commenced. Each of us was in charge of a kettle of mixed rum and every Indian was given a dram of fire-water by way of a starter. Speech making followed, washed down by another dram, then some more talkee-talkee, and another drink till every man jack of them had absorbed five drams and was ripe for business. They were told to go outside and we would trade with them. Some of them were drunk and those who were not soon became so, for they stayed a week and got as much as was good for them. There was no sleep to be had they kicked up such a row. One day when I was walking on the gallery of the fort I saw a brute of an Indian stab his squaw who was suckling her child at the time. I saw the poor woman sit down meekly and slowly bleed to death. It made my blood boil to see such horrible brutality but I could do nothing. In that weeks' spree four Indians were killed. They took a lot of rum away with them and on their way to the plains a battle occurred in which twenty were killed and many others wounded. The weeks trade left us with 600 horses and our warehouses very nearly filled. The boss said it was the best business for one weeks trade that he had ever seen. The Indians did a great deal of quarelling among themselves but did not bother us at all. They did not like the look of our blunderbusses and I didn't blame them. A glance down the muzzle of one of those death dispensers was enough to change an Indian into a white man and as for the cannon at the gate, whenever they looked at it they nearly shook

out of their skins with fright. It was loaded with 50 half-ounce balls. We found out afterward that the man on night watch at the gate had extracted the charge and traded it with other things for a horse to an Indian who wanted powder and ball. I am ashamed to say that this enterprising man was a Scotchman. It might have been a serious thing for us in case of a fight to have found that our means of defence were useless all because of a Scotchman's love of a bargain. After the departure of the Indians we had a busy time tidying up the place and branding the horses, and when that was done we had to prepare for haymaking. As before, we cut and fitted our fork and scythe handles. Just before we started haying, some Crees came to the Fort to say that their tribe had plenty of furs to trade, and they asked the boss to send some men to their camp with goods for barter, so eight of us with 16 carts were sent out to the plains on this business trip. They wanted the boss to send some rum with the goods, but he would not listen to them. It would surely have made a heap of trouble for us had de done so. Their camp was in the Red Deer country, and I was to see the plains and the running of the buffalo for the first time. We had with us clothing, beads, blankets, tobacco, powder and ball and a lot of other stuff to trade. On the sixth day we got to the Cree camp. It was a great sight to see 600 lodges together. There must have been at least 3,600 men, women and children in that camp, to say nothing of the dogs. For four days we traded, and each of our 16 carts were loaded with 1200 lbs of stuff purchased from the Indians. It was

all we could do to haul them back to the fort, indeed we had to send for fresh horses before we could do so. On the return trip I saw thousands of buffalo. A big herd is a sight never to be forgotten. In motion it looks like a sea of heaving backs and tossing tails and horns. One day I saw the Indians drive 800 buffalo into a pound, that is to say a round corral built very strongly. They did it in the most marvellous way, whooping and riding recklessly around the herd and using all sorts of strategems until their end was accomplished. When they got them safely in, they mounted the corral and commenced to kill the buffalo with arrows, driving them with such force as to send them nearly through the animals. The blood was ankle deep in the corrall and the mass of maddened and wounded animals bellowing with pain and fright was a fearful sight. Ten days after leaving the Cree camp we reached the Fort. The Boss was so pleased with the good business we had done that he gave us a drink all round. We found a real live English Lord at the camp with all the trimmings including a retinue of servants, a game-keeper and a valet-de-chambre. His outfit was so large that it required eight carts to carry it. His name was Lord Southest and he was on his way to the Rocky Mountains in search of big game. I had seen buffalo and Indians galore but this was the first live lord that had ever crossed my path and I was naturally a little nervous until he left. In three weeks he returned with 20 mountain sheep, a couple of bear and other trophies of the chase, proving that he belonged to a dangerous species and justifying my fear of Lords. It was now late

in the season and the time for the return of the boats was approaching and our store of tea, sugar and flour had been used up since midsummer and our stock of tobacco was getting low so we prayed for the day and the hour of their replenishment. The boats will arrive however in plenty of time for my next letter.

Rocky Mountain Echo, August 4, 1903.

The next morning after the hunt, we loaded our carts with the buffalo meat and made an early start for the fort. We had to travel with all possible speed for the weather was warm and there was danger of the meat spoiling. Every night we unpacked it and spread it out on the grass, but in spite of our care and expedition, when we reached the fort five days after starting, the meat was almost able to walk alone. It was a great pity for we had a fine lot of meat. When we got to the fort the women took charge of it. They cut it up and made dry meat and pemmican of what was still unspoiled. During our absance a French count, who had come the way from France to hunt the mountain sheep, arrived in camp with a big outfit. He brought a game keeper and a valet-de-chambre and fifteen men with him to look after his high and mighty comfort, and no less than ten carts were needed to accommodate the stuff they carried as "necessaries". The counts people lived on the best of grub and made a point of pitying us for the poor food we had to eat. They advised us to kick but there was no use stubbing our toes against a stone wall and we told them so. Two days afterwards the count pulled out for the mountains.

One morning shortly after this, having risen early, I heard cries for help from the other side of the river. I got another man to cross with me, and we soon found a poor Cree woman from whom the piteous cries had come. It seems that after we left the camp, a band of Crees followed us at a distance they, in their turn, were pursued by a large band

of Blackfeet, who fell upon them and killed them all. This woman was the only survivor, and she had been scalped and left for dead. Her head was a terrible sight; they had taken all the hair off and the poor thing was suffering intense pain from the wound. She told us scalping was like having a red-hot iron cap pressed upon the head. We took her to the Fort where her head was doctored, but, of course, the hair did not grow again. Two weeks after this, a band of Blackfeet came to trade, and when they left, a number of Crees who happened to be at the Fort, followed them and in revenge killed one of the Blackfeet and took his scalp.

About the last of August, the Frenchman came back from the mountains. He was delighted with the result of the hunt for 25 mountain sheep, two grizzly bears and a great deal of other game fell to the guns of his party. In a couple of days the Count left us to continue his journey back to France. On the 15th of September, the great event took place which brought us news from the East, run and a dance, tobacco to smoke and tea to drink. I mean the boats arrived from York Factory. The usual rejoicings took place. This time the men had news of a mutiny at Norway House to tell us. A very popular Irishman among the boat crews, who had served his term of three years, wanted to go back to Montreal. The Chief Factors at Norway House, being short of men, refused to let him go, saying that he was in debt and would have to stop another year to work it out. He was so well liked by the other men that they offered to pay his debt for him, but that was not what old "One-Pound-One"

wanted and he refused to take the men's money. All the boats left that day but one in which old One-Pound-One was to travel. The men left word with the crew of this boat to let them know at once if Jack Cockrelan, for that was the name of the Irishman, was to be forced to stay against his will. No sooner had the main flotilla pulled out than the Chiefs sent four understrappers of clerks (who were always ready to do that kind of dirty work) to arrest the Irishman. They found Jack cooking his dinner, and the whole four of them jumped on him, overpowered him, and got the handcuffs on his wrists before he knew what was happening. They had orders to put him in a little log house lockup and starve him until he was ready to sign a contract for another year. As soon as the crew who were left to man One-Pound-One's boat knew what had been done, they started out to bring back the rest of the men, and caught up to them at midnight. Then they unloaded the packs, left one man in charge, and pushed out for the Fort, where they arrived, mad as a nest of hornets, at daybreak. All the Chiefs were in bed asleep and the log lockup lay outside the Fort. It did not take long to break in the door and release Jack. He took things coolly. "Have any of you fellows got any baccy? I want a smoke in the worst way", said Jack. He seemed to feel worse about being deprived of his tobacco than at anything else, and nearly a whole day of prison without being allowed a smoke hurt him more than the thought of being made a goal bird of. When the Chiefs appeared, they ordered us to leave at once, but we would not go until they promised to let Jack return to Montreal. The boats were just starting and

we gained our point. Jack stepped on board, happy as a king. And now we thought, since the mutiny was doing a good business, we might as well gain something for ourselves, so we demanded, with a great show of firmness that every man should receive an allowance of one pound of tea each mounth, to have and to hold as long as his term of service should last. This the Chiefs promised for we had the big end of the stick.

We had another grievance, for which we wanted redress in the worst way. We were made to buy horses with our own money to do the Company's work with. They used to put the names of horses in a hat and make us draw lots for them. Whether a man drew a good horse or a brokendown old nag, the price was the same, L2, and it had to come out of our pay, which was small enough at the best. If a horse died on our hands (as they often did) we had to buy another to replace it--and mind you, we had no rights of ownership, not being allowed to sell or give away a horse for which we had paid our own money. And we were forbidden to use the horses for any other purpose then to haul meat from the plains or to draw a hay wagon or to do some work or other for the Company. Of course, it was most unjust of the Company, and we told them so. They agreed to supply us in the future with horses, gratis. Then we thought we had got enough ou of them and promised to go if old "One-Pound-One" would give us a quart of rum, all hands round, by way of a stirrup cup. At this, the old man did the heavy tragedy act, bared his brawny chest, and defied us, "Strike", he cried, "you can kill me, but you can't frighten me." We

told him we did not want to strike him for anything--but the drinks, and that we were after his rum, and not his blood. So he gave us the liquor on our promise not to get drunk on the premises. That was the last of the mutiny. The Chiefs kept their word about the tea and the horses. We did not have to pay again for other people's horses, and each man thereafter was allowed an extra £2 a year, which was the price of the monthly pound of tea. The other Chief Factors told "One-Pound-One" that the mutiny would never have happened if he had treated his men half decently. It did not improve the old curmudgeon's temper.

And now the fall packing of furs and preperation for the departure to the Forts kept us busy from morning to night. I was ordered to stay that winter at Edmonton to work in the coal yards. At last all the boats left us to our quiet life. Occasionally "One-Pound-One" would vary the monotony by coming out of his room to give us a periodic cursing. He was certainly a terror to swear, the finest master of blasphemy I have even heard. Nothing exciting except "One-Pound-One's" swearing fits happened until the New Year--our red letter day--arrived with its half gallon of rum each and its big dance. I was 20 years old and had only one more year to put in and Ho! for home and the East. (At least that's what I thought at the time).

There was plenty of company at Edmonton. 80 men lived at the fort and as most of these were married and had families, we used to have good times together. The grub too, was far better than at Rocky Mountain House. We used to get three whitefish each a day and plenty of potatoes.

So commenced the year 1852. In February I was sent with a party on to the plains to bring in buffalo meat. We each had eight horses with sleighs to drive. We went first to a large camp of Crees who had large quantities of dried meat put up on scaffolds. In my next I will tell you of another big buffalo hunt we had at this camp.

August 11, 1903.

A day or so after we got to the Cree camp, a big hunt was organized and hundreds of buffalo were killed. This hunt was much the same as the last one I had seen. The cries of the riders the wild pursuit, and the panic rush of the terrified buffaloes, stir the blood like whiskey, and almost intoxicate one with excitement. After it was all over, the place where the hunt had been most fiercely centred was piled with dead buffaloes and looked like a slaughter house. We filled two of the sleighs with tongues--over 1,000 in all--and each of our other fifty odd sleighs was loaded with nearly half a ton of choice meat. We started from the Cree camp about the 1st of March. It was intensely cold. On the fourth day, as we were crossing a frozen lake one of my horses gave out. The rest of the men went on leaving me to follow as best I could. I drove on slowly and it was midnight before I overtook them, camped at the side of the lake. Though it had been warm during the day, that night was bitterly cold, and I found that my feet had been badly frozen. An old man at the camp made me take off my shoes and keep my feet in the water hole all night. I suffered a great deal, but I believe the

heroic remedy saved my feet, and though by the time we reached the fort I still had my toes, I was minus the nails. Our journey took us five days. When we got to the Fort, I was laid up and unable to work. One-Pound-One thought my malady was an acute attack of laziness and tried to curse me out of my bed, but though I didn't mind his curses any more than so many bread-pills, they were just as futile to work my cure. When I had been in my room for a few days, too sick to get up, the old curmudgeon sent me a pile of oakum to "tease", and for the five weeks I was laid up I had to tease oakum from dawn till dark. A day or so after I got back to the boat yard, this pleasant gentleman paid me a visit and cursed me so hard that I told him I would not stand it any longer than I had to. We had to give one year's notice on leaving the Company, so I gave the Old Man warning on the spot. "Well," he said, "if you're going to leave, I'll send you to York Factory this summer." So that is how I got my second trip to York. It was now time for the boats to start. From every direction the men were coming into the Fort, and we were all .... packing furs and getting everything ready for our trip east. Until the day before the boats left I thought One-Pound-One had forgotten his promise, but that night I got word to join the boat crews. It was a hard trip, but I had to go. A Dr. Ray, who was organising a Franklin relief party to go to the mouth of the McKenzie river, and he offered to take any men from the Forts who were willing to go. I volunteered and was accepted, and agreed to meet him at Norway House on the 1st of June.

I told One-Pound-One I would go to York, but would not come back to Edmonton. However, things did not turn out as I expected, for we only got to Norway House on the 13th of June, nearly two weeks after the Doctor and his men had left. Perhaps it was just as well for me since ten of the men who went left their bones in the North--but that is getting ahead of my story.

On the 8th of May, 1852, we made a start. Our brigade numbered 27 boats all heavily laden and each manned by a crew of three. The first part of the trip was monotonous. In five days we reached Fort Pitt where they warned us to keep a bright look out for a band of Blackfeet who were on the war path and hovering somewhere near. About three days after we saw them approaching the river bank on horseback but as we had a good wind and current in our favor, they did not overtake us. They fired some shots at us which fell short of their mark.

We had now 31 boats in all, having picked up two at Fort Pitt and two at Fort Carleton. Below Fort Carleton there is a bad rapid called "Cole Falls" at which our boats were considerably damaged. After we ran the rapids I had plenty to do mending them, and I worked all night with "One Pound One" standing over me cursing and swearing until the cock-crow--and even then he did not have the grace to put in the plug. In a few days we passed Fort la Corne and went on to Fort Cumberland House, or rather as near to it as we could get by water. I had to get some lumber there which I needed for repairing the boats so I applied for it to the chief factor--old "One armed Louis".

He was a more peppery customer than even our own boss and cursed me until he was blue in the face for daring to ask anything from him. He told his men at last to give me what I wanted and to watch me closely and see that I did not steal anything "as we Sons of the Saskatchewan were all brothers in crime" he said. He remembered other relationships too, not mentioned in the book of Chronicles. At the Fort we had a dance and I particularly remember the nice girls who were there. Shortly after leaving Cumberland House one of our boats was struck by lightning and two of the men were nearly killed by the strcke. For hours it rained cats and dogs and the water rose rapidly.

At the entrance to Cedar Lake we lightened the boats and left some of their cargoes with two of the men, for it would have been impossible to have taken the heavily laden vessels through the rough waters of the lake with safety. We got through all right and arrived at the Grand Rapid. There we did more damage to the boats and again I had to work all night mending them. On the 1st of June we came to the entrance of Lake Winnipeg, but found navigation impossible on account of the ice. We had to stay there ten days to wait for the ice to break up. It was a good rest and holiday for us after so much hard work and we enjoyed walking in the woods where the wild flowers were as thick as the mosquitoes. The shore of the lake was the dividing line between summer and winter, and after gathering flowers and receiving bites from hungry mosquitoes in the bush, we used to vary our excursions by a walk out on the ice. We had quite a picnic during those ten days.

Then we embarked and after five day's rowing reached Norway House on the other shore. The canoes from Montreal had come and gone. In the mail they brought were some letters for me which told me my folks were well and now living in Boston. Seventeen of our boats we left at Norway House and the remaining 14 were repacked for York Factory. And now commenced the hardest part of our trip. We got away on the 19th of June, and from the first day had plenty of trouble. The river was rapid and hard to navigate and instead of a crew of 3 men we had now 8 to each boat. Every day some accident or other happened, and I was kept busy repairing the boats. We had frequent portages to make and our progress slow. The only consolation was we had plenty to eat. On the 16th day we reached York Factory and unloaded the boats, hauled them up on the beach, and repaired them for the return trip. Then we went to the store to get our rations, which consisted of 2 loaves of bread, 2 lbs. of pork, some tea, a pint of treacle, and last but not least, 1 gallon of rum. We had a big feast and a good part of the rum went down our throats on the first night. There was plenty of fight in that good old Hudson's Bay rum, and it made the most peaceable man thirsty for blood. I never felt braver in my life and as the fellow who had pounded me four years before was there, I made up my mind that he had to take a licking and I gave him one. I think that was the only fight I ever got away with in my whole life. There were lots of boats at the Factory, and each brigade had a bully to represent it. We happened to have the best man in the whole outfit with us

and during our stay he had a fight on his hands most of the time. After the first day or so, I had to go into the boat yard to work and missed all the fun that was going on. It took us over two weeks to get ready for the return trip which I will tell about in my next letter.

August 18, 1903.

My last letter brought me to the end of our summer in York. I got the boats into ship-shape for the journey and bought my winter outfit at the store. The boats were all loaded and we were waiting for the turn of the tide to take us up the river, when the Rainy River Brigade arrived with a "bully" whom the Factor thought could get away with our champion. You must know that every brigade carried a "bully" in those days, and when two brigades met there was usually a fight. Now our man was a dandy. He had whipped every bully he had ever fought and "One-Pound-One" was not the man to refuse a challenge. He and the Factor of the Rainy River Brigade arranged a fight between their favorites and put up their greenbacks on the result. Of course, we could not think of business before pleasure so we stayed another day to pull off the row. It was a businesslike mill, none of your modern calisthenics with fancy steps and feints and dodges where the man with the best wind and the quickest eye wins. But if science was lacking there was plenty of hard hitting and lots of blood flowing. One-Pound-One enjoyed it more than any of us, and we were having a good time. He yelled with glee every time

our man got in a good punch and when the fight was over, and what remained of the Rainy river bully was being fanned back to life again, he fairly whooped with joy. They say the devil himself is pleasant when he's well pleased, and I think it must be so for "One-Pound-One" gave us a quart of rum all hands round to follify on and we were soon as proud and happy as himself. Well, we got off with the tide which carried us up the river about 50 miles. Not having any rowing to do we got to drinking in the boats and a lot of little amateur fights were arranged and settled right in the boats. It was dangerous work but no one was hurt or drowned. The men kept up the spree all night, and between the mosquitoes and the noise the men made I could not sleep a wink. Next morning we gobbled up our bread and pork at breakfast and had to fall back on dry pemmican for the rest of the trip. This time I was able to stand the work much better than four years before. One-Pound-One passed us at Oxford House, and when we got to Norway House, 25 days after leaving York, we found him there. He only stayed long enoughtto take on a stock of grub and here was the first time I saw Father Lacombe. He and a Methodist minister, Thomas Wolsley, took boat for Edmonton. That was the first week in August, 1852. The night after leaving, we camped at the mouth of Lake Winnipeg. Next day the wind was blowing too hard for us to venture on the lake, and for 12 days we were storm-stayed. We ran out of grub and had to unload our boat and send it back to the Fort for more. One-Pound-One treated us as if we were responsible for the weather and any of us

who went too near got well cursed for our temerity.

The wind dropped on the 12th day and we started to cross the lake. We had a smooth trip and soon reached the rapids at the mouth of the Saskatchewan River where we made a portage and soon pushed on. Thanks to the presence of the priest and the Methodist minister we had a holiday every Sunday till 2 o'clock in the evening. During the day services were held. It was a long time since any of us had heard any preaching and most of us needed it badly enough by this time. We were all eager to reach Carlton House and the buffalo and the Saskatchewan girls and the dance that awaited us. Our next stop was at the mission where we bought a stock of potatoes which soon disappeared down our throats. We had not tasted potatoes since the previous winter. At Old Dive's Hill we found the hunters awaiting us and several of the men were joined by their wives. "One Pound One" left us here, going overland on horseback. Next day the hunters brought us in pletry of buffalo meat. Three days later we got to Carlton House and had the usual dance. Next morning we resumed our journey through the buffalo country. I dont think I ever saw so many buffalo as we came across between Carlton and Fort Pitt. Some of the greenhorns overate themselves but the rest of us were seasoned to it and we stuffed ourselves without getting sick. At Fort Pitt they told us that a band of Blackfeet on the war path had killed and scalped two of the women of the Fort while away picking berries. We arrived in Edmonton on the 25th of September and found the men from the other forts already there.

We were told to unload the boats at once and distribute the packs. I got orders to join the Rocky Mountain House Brigade and on the 10th of October we started. It was the hardest trip I ever made for the ice was thick in the river and the weather bitterly cold. We were all glad when on the 4th of November the Fort hove in sight.

We found that all the work of cleaning up around and in the fort had been done and after unloading the boats we were free to enjoy ourselves. We had a dance that evening and next day settled down to work. I was put into the boat yard. We were well off for grub that winter for the buffalo were ranging quite near the fort and the Indians also brought us lots of dried meat.

About Christmas the yearly draft of Orkeny men arrived. While coming up the river their boat was frozen in below Carleton House and they had to leave it and foot it all the way to Rocky Mountain House. Thanks to the outiny we had tea and flour that winter and fared better than in former years. It was, of course, a lonely life. I did not have anything to read except a few books I got at York. None of the other men seemed to care about reading, but I was always fond of it. During the winter we had a two weeks visit from Mr. Wolsley, the Methodist minister. On the 3rd of May, the ice went down the river, and on the 5th we started again for Edmonton. On the way down we killed four bears and reached the fort safely. At Edmonton, One-Pound-One sent for me and asked me if I was willing to renew my engagement with the Compnay. I told him I would think it over, and at last concluded to stay for two more years for the sum of L25 a year. Two considerations helped me to

this decision. My folks had all gone to the States and there were some very nice girls at Edmonton so that I did not want to leave just then. I told One-Pound-One that I did not want any more trips to York--that was the condition on which I was willing to stay. He promised to let me stay in Edmonton to build boats that summer. In a few days the York boats left, and One-Pound-One went with them, but he only got as far as Fort Pitt, where he kicked the bucket. I think his death gave more genuine pleasure to us than anything he could have done for us. I will tell you about his death in my next.

August 25, 1903.

So ended my first five years with the Hudson's Bay. I commenced my second term as journey man boat-builder and soon after signing a contract for two more years the boats lfet for York. About three weeks after their departure a son of One Pound One came from Fort Pitt to take charge for the summer at Edmonton. He told us all the particulars of his father's death. It seems that when the men arrived at Fort Pitt they got into a good fight and raised a row that .... the old man's ears. He hastened to the scene of the fight fuming with rage and frothing at the mouth. He got himself worked up to a great pitch, trying to stop the fight and swore like a madman. Suddenly he dropped in his tracks and when lifted up was found to be stone dead. When the men who were on the river bank heard the news there was great rejoicing and all around the

country. His son threatened to kill the man who was the innocent cause of his father's death but he escaped to the woods and with a Frenc' halfbreed and his wife as guides, fled from pursuit. One night they camped at Vermillion river. The fugitive whose name was Paul, took his axe to cut timber for a raft and the halfbreed with his gun, left the camp to hunt game for supper. While Paul was engaged in felling a tree, he was shot dead by the Frenchman who claimed that seeing him dimly through the underbrush he mistook him for a wild animal and fired. We all believed the truth of the matter was that Paul had been murdered by the halfbreed and that One found One's son had bribed him to follow Paul and kill him. The poor fellow was buried where he fell and nothing further was said about the matter. The Chief Factor was the only judge and jury then and could do pretty much as he liked even to the extent of making away secretly with an enemy. There was no one beside himself to represent the law and no one to insist on justice. One found One was buried at Fort Pitt. Next spring his body was taken up and an old Cree boiled all the flesh off his bones which were sent to St. Boniface for burial. The women say that long before the(water)boiled in the cauldron they heard groans and hisses issuing from . It did not take much to make the old man hot when he was alive and perhaps even his inflammable old carcass resented the indignity of being boiled in a pot like beef. Women are always a trifle superstitious and I dont place much faith in that story.

Perhaps it "grew some" since. There was also a yarn about their making a by-rpoduct of soap from his remains so that on wash-days the old man in the form of soap, became a blessing to the Fort but I dont believe that story either for he was too far from godliness in life to become an agent of cleanliness after death. And so goodbye to old One-Pound-One! I hope he is not in that hot place to which he was always sending us but if he is, Satan must have given him a place among his advisers for he certainly had all the qualifications to make a first class devil. His son was a chip of the old block and when we got rid of him too, a year later there was not one of us that did not bear his grief like a man and if we used our handkerchiefs it was to hide our smiles.

Shortly after this, I was sent to Fort Assiniboine to mend the boats of the Slave Lake post. I was given two packhorses to carry my tools, and a saddle horse to ride. With a halfbreed and his wife as guides, I started for the Fort on the 20th of July. On the way we killed two bears and plenty of other game. The trip took us 7 days. Of all the lonely places I ever stayed at Fort Assiniboine was the worst. I worked like a nailer in order to get away as soon as possible. A day before I got through, an Indian came to the fort and I got him to go back with me. On the 21st day we set out, and I hoped that I would never see that lonesome place again, but some years afterwards it was my fate to be sent there once more. The next day we met an Indian in the woods who told me that his lodge was near by. As it was raining very hard and I had no

tent, I went with him. I found out the reason for his hospitality. He and his wife and five children had no grub, and on account of the rainy weather, he had not been able to shoot any game. I only had a little pemmican myself. It lasted us only one meal, and the next morning I pulled out without a morsel to eat. It rained all that day, and we did not see any game to kill. At night we camped under a big tree and went supperless to bed. Next morning I sighted my breakfast in the shape of a jack rabbit that came nosing round the camp. I guess he never had as hungry a man as me after him, for I ran him down and killed him before you could say "Polly get the griddle on.' It didn't take me long to make a fire and cook the rabbit. After breakfast and a smoke I felt first rate, and hit the trail again. In the afternoon I came to a camp of 10 lodges of Stonies. They had just killed a bear and a moose, and I had the meal of my life. I gave them some tobacco and they wanted me to stay with them as long as I had anything left to smoke. My Indian refused to go on with me as they were to have a feast and dance that night. There was no use my leaving without a guide, so I had to stay till morning. I had my own troubles that night. In order to prove my friendliness I had to eat and smoke in every lodge, and the racket those Indians kicked up was enough to deafen a man. I was glad enough when morning came and it was time to start. I had trouble with my Indian, who did not want to leave. However, I got him away at last and after exchanging some tobacco for moose-meat, we left the camp. Before we had gone 10 miles my

Indian gave me the slip, I was left alone in a strange country. At night I came to the camp of an Orkeny half-breed. He had no food so I shared my moose meat with him and started next morning without any grub. It was my fate to meet with starving people. But it was only one day's trip to Edmonton and I did not care. There was one more river to cross between me and safety. I came to this stream, Sturgeon River, and found it swelled by the rains and dangerous to ford. There was a canoe on the other side and as I was afraid to tackle the river that night I waited on the chance of some one coming from the fort who would bring the canoe across. I had no covering to protect me from the heavy rain, no grub to cheer me up inside and the mosquitos hummed in swarms about me and picniced all night on my blood. It was one of the worst nights I ever put in. Daylight came at last but no one from the Fort. There was no help for it, I had to ford the river or starve. I rode one of my horses and in the deepest part of the river he fell backward and rolled over with me. I swallowed more water than was good for me and made a struggle for land which I reached at last more dead than alive. That was one of the narrowest escapes from drowning I ever had. I unmoored the canoe and went over for my packs. It was only nine miles to Edmonton but I was so weak from hunger that it seemed a long way. I met a halfbreed on the road who gave me some dried meat, and I nibbled that as I rode along. At 10 o'clock I reached the fort and never was so glad to have done with a trip before. The very thought of that experience makes me tired, so I think I'll take a weeks rest before telling more

of my troubles.

September 1, 1903.

It was some time in August when I got back from my trip to Fort Assiniboia. I found a lot of settlers at Edmonton on their way to the Caldwell valley. There were 45 families in the party, most of them Orkeny half breeds, under the leadership of a Mr. Sinclair. They came from a place called Frog Plain, on the Red River, five miles below Winnipeg. They crossed the mountains at the head of the North Fork, but had to leave some of their carts at the foot of the pass. They asked our Factor for the loan of some horses to go back and recover them, but he refused, offering instead to help them on their way. When they got to the head of the North Fork they smashed some of the 50 carts that remained and burnt the rest, using the horses to carry their packs. It was late in the fall when they entered the Pass, and they did not reach Caldwell Valley until the New Year. Most of their cows and sheep were lost on the way. The Chief Factors made it a rule to help strangers out of the country--they did not want them to spy out the land and settle near their posts.

The same things happened every fall at Edmonton. The boats from York arrived, and the men from the different forts received their goods and set out for home. I was sent back to Rocky Mountain House. We asked to have tea given us for this trip instead of the usual allowance of rum. When we came to a bad place on the river, we sent on a man to build a fire and brew a kettle of tea. We drank

hot tea 7 or 8 times a day, and found we did better work on it than on the rum. We finished in prime condition two days sooner than ever before, but lest these statements might read like a temperance tract, I must confess that the way we made up for our tee-totalism at the dance was a caution to the young to stick to the cup that cheers and does nothing else. By midnight no one would have recognized us as a company of Blue Ribbon Voyageurs.

We arrived on the 3rd of November and as luck would have it found that the Indians had been before us with dried meat. We did not have to starve that winter for buffalo meat was plentiful. I was boss in the boat yard that winter and had a better time than I was used to. Our Chief Factor was struck down with palsy in December. He took his dogs out one day to look after the traps and when he was examining them, the dogs ran away. He had to foot it to the fort and the exposure of his cold 15 mile walk brought on a paralysis of his limbs which he could never use again. We sent to Edmonton for someone to take his place. The man appointed was Jas. Simpson, a son of Sir George Simpson. The old man had many sons whom he provided for by giving them clerkships in the Company after they had finished their schooling and then left them to shift for themselves. Mr. Simpson made a first-rate Boss and we all liked him.

We had our usual dance and allowance of rum on the eve of the New Year 1854. It was very cold that winter but spring came at last and we started on our Eastward trip down the river to Edmonton on the 6th of May. I worked in

the boat yard and the summer passed like all the others except that we had church every Sunday. The Minister Mr. Woolsley, who had been at Pigeon Lake with the Stonies all winter, passed the summer at the Fort. Father Lacombe also made us a few visits so that our spiritual health was well looked after. The boats arrived in September and the same old programme was gone through. Mr. Moberly from Jasper was made Factor of Rocky Mountain House that fall. We started in two boats for the West, the weather being intensely cold at the time. Four days' from our destination it commenced to snow and the floating ice was so thick in the river we had to lay up. I sent a man back to Edmonton to say we could not go on as the ice was cutting our boats to pieces. He returned with some tin and tacks with which to sheathe the bows of the boats. He told me if I could not then continue , to load one boat with the bulkiest of the stuff and return with the other. We manned one of the boats with a crew of ten, and loaded it with the least valuable of the goods. They proceeded up the river but it was a hard trip, ice all the way. When they got to the Fort on the 20th of November, there was only a narrow channel of open water left, hardly room enough for the boats and in some places they had to break the ice to get a passage. I sent the other boat with the rest of the goods back to Edmonton and went across country to meet the pack train sent from Edmonton and bring all the horses that could be spared back to the Fort to carry our packs. I caught the outfit next day. It was a hard chase for I had to walk 45 miles. I camped with them that

night and next morning with another man started with 30 horses and pack saddles back for Edmonton. Roland, my companion gave me the pemmican to carry. I tied it on one of the horses but in going through the woods it was knocked off and lost and we were minus our grub. We saw plenty of rabbits but had no gun to shoot them with. At nightfall we came across some Stonies camped in a couple of tents. "This is luck" I said to Roland, "now we'll get something to eat." We unsaddled our horses and going into one of the tents asked for food. There was a kettle steaming over the fire but the Squaw who was stirring it, told us she had nothing to eat. I asked her what was in the nauseous mixture of roots and the scrapings of hides and skins which she was boiling for supper. We were hungry enough to eat anything and we asked for a sample of the soup. Ugh! It was enough to have turned the stomach of an Ostrich for the hair had not been taken out of the scrapings nor the roots washed clean of dirt and gravel and after we had swallowed the soup a residue of hair and stones remained in our mouths. It was pretty tough even for a free lunch and next morning we preferred no breakfast at all to a repetition of the dose. Next day at four o'clock in the afternoon we reached Edmonton, hungry as bears and glad enough to see a good meal before us which soon disappeared you may be sure, for the wise men tell us that food is the only cure for hunger. The following day we packed our horses and left for Mountain House. It was late in the fall and snow lay deep on the ground. We were fifteen days making the trip and found when we arrived

that the boat had only beaten us by one day. I think this letter is quite long enough so good bye until next week.

September 8, 1903.

My last letter brought me to the fall of '54 and our arrival with our new Boss, Mr. Moberly at Rocky Mountain House. About New Year Mr. Moberly planned a trip to Edmonton. I asked him to take me along with him. We started on the 2nd of January with three teams of dogs and four men. For the first four days we got along without mishap. On the fifth day, with still half the road to go, a show-storm overtook us. I wanted Mr. Moberly to camp until the storm should cease but he produced a compass and said that with it we could not lose our way we kept on travelling until dark. Then we camped for the night. In the morning we found ourselves lost, as Paddy would say, and all that day hunted in vain for the trail. The worst part of the business was our lack of grub. All we had to eat for the next eight days was a rabbit and a big owl. That owl might possibly have been in its prime at the time of the American Revolution. I am willing to bet it was over 100 years old. We boiled the owl all night and next morning Mr. Moberly tried to divide it for us. He hacked away for an hour without success and then with a sigh remarked "it couldn't be helped." I didn't know whether he referred to our bad luck or the tough owl. Even the dogs couldn't make any impression on that owl.

So you can imagine it was a pretty tough bird. The dogs were so ravenous that we had to hang everything, even the sleighs, on the trees out of their reach. One of the men had his mocassins stolen from under his head while he slept. The canine thief ate them both and next morning was convicted of the theft "out of his own mouth" for one of the strings was seen entangled among his teeth. The owner tried to recover his property but the string broke. He had to wrap his feet in strips of blanket before hitting the trail. That day we got out of the bush and struck the bank of the river 30 miles above the Fort. Then we knew we were heading in the right direction for home. In the evening at camping time we nabbed our rabbit. Mr. Moberly divided it in equal parts and after stowing it in our empty cupboards we felt more hopeful and less hungry. We were so eager to get to the Fort we started that very night but had to stop because of the air holes in the ice. However we got to Edmonton next day at noon having taken 16 days to accomplish a five days' journey.

.....Chief Factor, Mr. J. Sinclair, was as nice a Factor as they made them in those days. He took us to his kitchen, and told his cook to feed us well. The amount of barley soup we got away with would have floated a canoe. After a good dram of rum we took a long sleep and woke none the worse for our experience. Our boss, however, very nearly died from the effects of some half cooked pancakes. We had to roll him on the floor all night long. His groans were pitiful to hear. I never heard a man in quite so repentant a state of mind and body. He sounded

like an old fashioned Methodist under conviction of sin. Poor fellow, his heart was in the right place, but his stomach was weak and Eastern, for he had just come from Toronto. During the trip he often told us of the fine meals he used to have the winter before. Those kind of tales are tantalising to hear on an empty stomach, and I think the pancakes were sent as a punishment for describing five course dinners to starving men. The ringleader of the strike among the boatmen, which prevented our getting both boats up the river the fall before, was in Edmonton. He was a big Frenchman, but not too big for our boss to tackle. Instead of arresting him, Mr. McBerly took the law in his own hands and fought him to a finish. They stood up to each other in a fair and square fight and at the tenth round the Frenchman was knocked out. We stayed for 8 days and I expected to be sent back to Rocky Mountain House, but Mr. Sinclair, who was a good fellow and knew very well that I had come down just to see my girl, told me I had better stay at Edmonton for the rest of the winter. He wanted me to build a fancy boat. Now that plan suited me for I was going to be married in the Spring and wanted to be near my girl to make sure of her. The winter passed quietly, and the spring came at last. I made it all right with my girl and on the 6th of May, '55, we were married. I had now been 7 years with the Company, and my last term with them had just expired, so I made up my mind to be my own master for a while and settle on the Red River on a place of my own. A week after our marriage, we started for Norway House and got

there safely. Sir George Simpson, the Governor of Rupert's Land, was there holding a council with all the Chief Factors of the country. Sone of the Factors got to objecting to certain plans of Sir George's. He let them wrangle for a while. Then he jumped up and shook his fist in their faces. "You d.....fools," he shouted, "what are you arguing about? I have had the minutes of this meeting in my pocket ever since I left London. I propose to boss this job, and I'm going to do it,"---and he did. Sir George was about to start with three canoes for the Red River. As he was short of men, I vulunteered to go with him and was accepted. He told me to be ready next morning at 7 o'clock and not to bring any baggage, "But what will I do for a change of clothes when I get there?" I mildly asked. "I will see to that sir!"he thundered and I was glad to get out of the house before he snapped my head off. I bought three chains of land fronting on the Red Deer and had to pay the Hudsons Bay Co; about $90 for it. This was rather a blow to me for I expected to be allowed to homestead. My wife was to follow with her father in the boats later on. Bare-footed with nothing but a shirt and a handkerchief for a cap, I embarked in one of the canoes and started for the Red River. We had the hardest kind of a trip but of that I will tell you in my next.

September 15, 1903.

And now for our trip to the Red River. We started from Norway House with three canoes, each manned by 17 at 7 o'clock on the morning of the 7th of July, '55. Sir G George Simpson had five Chief Factors with him on this trip. We used to stop at 9 o'clock for breakfast, which consumed half-a-hour. At noon, a halt was called for dinner, but in 20 minutes we were off again, and at 10 o'clock we camped for the night. After that there were fires to light, grub to cook, and the canoes to unload and get into shape for the next day. We had to turn them upside down and patch them up if they needed repairs. All this work kept us busy till midnight. At 2 o'clock we were wakened, and by three commenced another day's paddle. This routine was repeated every day, Thank God the trip did not last long, or we should have been reduced to "whispers". The weather was favorable for our passage over the lake, but was intensely hot. We made the low Fort Garry on the third day at noon and the Stone Fort an hour later. Sir George, who was a hustler, ordered the canoes to be unloaded at once, and preceded us to the Upper Fort. Before he left he gave us permission to get what clothing and supplies we needed at the stores. We camped on the beach where we landed, and at the end of a week the boats, with my wife and father-in-law, arrived. The land I had bought from the Col was at Selkirk, 3 miles below the Stone Fort, and I set out to inspect my farm. It was good to feel myself a free man starting out as my own master after seven years of service with the Co..

I started at once for the spot and set about building a house and preparing a place for my bride. The Red River settlement at that time consisted of a row of farms on the river bank. The average farm had a frontage of three chains and extended back some two miles. The settlement commenced about 5 miles below the Fort and extended for 40 miles along the Red River and up the north bank of the Assinaboia to a point 30 miles from where the city of Winnipeg now stands. The settlers nearest the Fort were mainly Orkney men, next to theirs was the Scotch settlement and the remainder of the farms were owned by French half-breeds. At that time there were some 5,000 people living in the Red River Valley. For the first 20 miles, the settlement was built along the west bank of the river, and from that on the bulk of the farms were situated on the left bank. The Company had things pretty well in their own hands. The farmers had but one market for their produce--the Company, and received for what they had to sell, whatever price they chose to pay. We could only get our supplies from them and had to give what they asked. I finished my house some time in August, and then went up to Frot Garry to get the money that was coming to me. In my seven years I had saved £20 of my pay, and had to take it in mixed silver--some in shillings and some in sixpences. It made quite a load to carry, but I did not grumble at the weight. The only paper money in the country was issued by the Company--queer looking notes they were of two denominations--of five shillings and £1. They were

called "Hudson's Bay Blankets" and were 5 inches wide by 10 long. If there had been anywhere at the Fort where I could have got a drink I would have been willing to blow in some of my silver, but the only place where it could be got was at the stores. Rum was to be had there at 12 shillings a gallon, but a man had to play sick and get an order from the doctor before they would sell it. I was too healthy looking to deceive the doctor and had to stay sober and thirsty.

After we got settled in our house, I received a contract to build York boats and for a time did very well, but the place was dull. No more news of the outside world than we used to get at Edmonton. My wife and I were beginning to regret the change and we missed the old life, so that when Mr. Sinclair sent to ask me to rejoin the company, I re-engaged with them for another three years, at the rate of L35 per annum. On June 10th, we left the Red River settlement for Norway house, there to await the boats from York. I stayed there all summer mending old boats. Mr. Sinclair wanted me to go to York, but I had had enough of that trip and refused to go. I embarked in the fall once more for Edmonton, and arrived some time in October. From there I was sent to Fort Assinaboia to cut timer for boats I was to build next spring for the Slave Lake trade. I took one man with me and started early in November. We were at the Fort for about six weeks sawing timber. We got back to Edmonton shortly before the New Year's dance. For the rest of the winter I worked at house building as the boat yard was

full. In March I returned to Fort Assineboia to build the boats. The snow was six feet deep when we started. We had to walk on snowshoes. Four teams of dogs drew our tools, nails and other material required in our work. We took enough provisions with us to last us during our stay, for there was nothing to be got in the way of food there. I took my wife with me this time so that it was not so lonely as before.

October 6, 1903.

The development of the country as I said in my last letter had the effedt of diminishing the power of the Hudson's Bay Co. Their "absolute monarchy" was now a limited one and we reaped the benefit in various ways. For one thing we were allowed to buy two sacks of flour instead of only half a sack as formerly. This summer an expedition from England came to Edmonton to report on the country and its possibilities. Among the company was a Captain Pallister Doctor Hector, Mr. Sullivan, Captain Blackstone and a French botanist. They had a large outfit of carts with them which they left at the fort while they went exploring about the country. They did not let a flower or a fly or an insect escape their spectacles and their nets and the collection of bugs and plants they made would have filled a museum. Towards fall another party of miners on their way to British Columbia paid us a visit and gave us news of civilization. And so the summer passed and the York boats returned. I was again sent to Rocky Mountain House. Thank God, it was my last trip there though I did not know that at the time. A great disappointment awaited us at the fort. We got no rum and the dance without the usual gallon was a pitiful .....The company had come to the conclusion to shut off our liquor and henceforth no more rum was to be shipped from England so we men and the Indians had to do without it in the future. Soon after we got settled Captain Pallister's party came back to the fort to spend the winter with us so that life was not so lonely as usual.

Doctor Hector had a good stock of books with him some of which he lent to me. We used to have many a chat together and grew to be great friends. Buffalo were plentiful too that year and we did not want for meat. Then too we could indulge in cakes now and then, made from our private stock of flour, so that take it all together I put in one of the best winters I ever spent in the country. We were all sorry to say goodbye to Captain Hallister and his party when they left us to continue their travels over the ountains. I believe that Doctor Hector was the first white man to go throug the Kicking Horse Pass. He was nearly killed by the kick of a horse one day while on his way and it was he who gave the pass its name to commemorate the accident which nearly cost him his life. Captain Hallister afterwards wrote a book describing the country and the incidents and experiences of that expedition, which is considered to be one of the best western books published.

When spring came it was decided to leave six men at the fort for the summer and I was one of the half dozen chosen. It was the first time the fort was occupied during the summer months. We had plenty of work before us for we had to tear down the old fort which was nearly in ruins, and build a new one. We were left on short rations and had to depend on the Stoneys who were almost starving themselves that summer. Before August we killed and ate twenty five dogs for want of other food. Some time in August our boss went down stream to meet the boats at Edmonton and secure his winter outfit and left me in

charge. After he was gone the starving men made up their minds to have some horse meat. There were plenty of bronchos at the fort and we killed five of them. They were fat and made much better food than dog meat but when the boss got back and found out what we had done, he gave me a hell of a going over for not sending to ask permission. I told him we would have starved to death before his consent could have been obtained. He said "hat did not matter to him, it was easier to replace a few men than five dead horses." I had to shoulder the whole blame and they never left me in charge again.

The boats reached the Fort on the 6th of November, and we were glad indeed to welcome our mates after all we had gone through. After the dance we settled down for the winter at the same old task of boat building. From some Blackfeet, who came to trade, we got enough dry meat to last us until the New Year. After that we got no more for the rest of the winter, since the Indians, who were camped on the Belly River, found it much nearer to go to Fort Benton to trade. Besides, we had no rum to give them, and I expect that had something to do with the loss of their custom. Our hunters could shoot nothing but elk, which is poor meat to eat. However, we rubbed along until the 1st of March when our boss decided to cache our stuff and return to Edmonton. We built a blockhouse 4 miles below the Fort and stowed away our goods and furs and made ready to abandon the Fort. We had built but five boats up to this time and these were not finished. I told the Boss I was willing to stay and finish them, if

another man bore me company. He said I could do so if I liked, but that he could not let me have any grub. The trip was bound to be a long one for the snow was soft and travel difficult, and it would take all the grub he had to feed the men and their families on the way down. The two men who assisted me in the boat yard were willing to stop, and Mr. Clover, who was at the Fort prospecting for gold, made a fourth. I wished to send my family to Edmonton, but my wife was determined to stay with me, so we who remained were a party of seven all told. The boss could only spare us 200 pounds of meat, and as he took all the dogs and horses with him we had nothing to fall back on when our grub should give out. We moved down to the blockhouse and went to work on the boats. As the snow was deep and soft we could not do any hunting and had to put ourselves on short rations. In a couple of weeks the geese began to come, and we managed to kill some of them. It was a hand to mouth existence, but we generally had at least one meal a day. One day Mr. Clover and I had a falling out. He accused me of cheating him of his share of the grub and giving it to my family. I told him that the grub was my own, that he was on his own hook and I was not obliged to feed him. He was hungry and savage and so was I and from words we came to blows. In the fight that followed I got the best of him but he pulled a pistol and was about to shoot me when my wife who was standing close by knocked the pistol out of his hand with an axe and saved my life. I thought it was all over with me and so it would have been if my wife had not been quick with the axe.

October 13, 1903.

When the men arrived to take the boats back to Edmonton we had everything in readiness. On the fourth of May the ice began to move and next morning we started. When we had made the first twenty miles we came to a great gore of ice and had to put ashore and wait for it to move. The winter had been very cold and the ice was exceedingly thick; at the edge of the jam it was piled up to a height of 50 ft. and caused the water to back up for a mile. It was an impressive sight. With a roar like thunder the gore at last began to move and took trees and brush before it. Before long we were stopped by another gore which detained us a day and by this time our scanty stock of grub gave out. Thank Heaven! I was soon to be done with these starvation trips, for as it turned out I was never to see Rocky Mountain House and that part of the west again.

I was reading in the Free Press the other day of the Crees and their great medicine men and before I say goodbye to their country I will tell you of my own experience. It was in the year 1854 that our Boss at the Fort was struck with palsy. The half breeds said that an Indian medicine man had put a spell on him and brought on the fit by means of his balck art. The only way to aid him was to get a stronger medicine man to work counter-spells, they told us. An Indians, who happened to be at the Fort, offered to drive away the palsy. He demanded the payment of one gallon of rum and some tobacco in advance as his fee. The boss asked me what I thought of Indian doctors, and I told him that I did not believe in the nonsense, but if he thought the noise of their drums and the mostrums they

used would do him no harm he might as well let them try their worst. He fixed up a tent for the big medicine man to perform his cure in and carried the boss, wrapped in furs into it. Then the farce commenced. After a little time spent in drumming and other preliminary nonsense the medicine man asked me for a piece of an old gun barrel which he wanted in his business. There were some old gun barrels in the blacksmith shop and I cut off a section, of the desired length. Not knowing the purpose for which it was intended in cutting the barrel I left the ends jagged and rough with little fish hook edges. The fool of a medicine man in his fanatical excitement, rammed the tube half way down his throat and of course the ragged edges stuck in his gullet and his eyes bulged out and his face got black in his efforts to pull it out. I watched him for a minute and then jumped up and thumped him on the back of the neck--up came the tube and a stream of blood followed it. That was the end of the business. The noble medicine man instead of curing the boss nearly killed himself.

With my arrival at Edmonton my two years contract ended. I was once more my own man. Mr. Hardisty, the Factor in charge that summer, asked me to engage for another term. I thought it over and in a day or so signed for another year. That was in May '61. I was to receive no more wages than the other boat builders, but he promised me an extra L2 over my L35 a year and a good horse into the bargain. So for another summer I bossed it in the boat yard. The times were changed from the lonely days

when we saw no one but the servants of the company and heard no news save that the boats brought. People were coming and going constantly on their way to the mines across the mountains and to those on the river. They brought whiskey with them and in the absence of any other liquor we were glad to get an occasional pull at even the rot-gut stuff they had to offer.

The summer passed quietly and the York boats came and all the flotillas left for the different posts. I was to remain in Edmonton for the winter as boss of the boat yard. The New Year of '62 came in with dancing and fun(and a little rum to cheer us up, this year.) and the winter wore on. We had plenty of fish and meat and potatoes and for a wonder did not know what it was to be hungry. The most important event of the winter to me was the arrival of our third child, a little girl. And now I am nearing the end of my life with the Hudson's Bay Co. for I am to leave its service for ever and a day in the spring. Of my after experience I will tell you in my next letter.

October 20, 1903.

Some time during a party of Blackfeet came in to trade. They were on foot, the snow being deep, and their furs and dry meat were loaded on dogs. While trading at the Fort a party of young Crees on their first warpath arrived, looking for trouble. They were young and eager for a fight. The oldest of them was not more than sixteen. To avoid trouble the chief had them locked up in one of the bastions and gave orders to have them kept there until the Blackfeet finished their trading. Everything went well until one of the Blackfeet kicked up a row in the store, and the Factor ordered the gates to be opened, declaring the trade off. As he was leaving with the rest of the tribe, the Indian who had tried to make trouble in the store, stole an old horse just outside the fort and made off with it. We saw the theft from one of the fort's galleries, and one of us suggested that it would be a good idea to let the imprisoned Crees have the chance they wanted so they were turned loose and at one started in pursuit. There were some 20 of these young bloods, and 35 of the Blackfeet. The Crees crossed the river on the ice, and for a couple of hours we waited developments. Not hearing any shouting or shooting we concluded that the Crees had not caught up to their enemies. After awhile the youngsters returned. I was at work with an old Frenchman in the boat yard when one of the Crees rushed into the yard, flourishing a scalp about 3 inches long by 2 broad. "Look! me big warrior, got scalp, grandfather. Look at him!" yelled the boy. The old man asked his grandson to let him see

it. He looked at it, and identifying the special brand of insects in the hair, he nodded his head, and in tones of conviction, cried. "Dam! he one Blackfoot scalp, sure!" One of the Blackfeet, it seems, was not as good a runner as the rest, and lagging behind was killed and scalped about two miles from the fort. Some of the men went out next morning to see the body and found that it had been cut up into small pieces. As the Chief had given no orders, they left the remains unburied. A few days afterward Father Lacombe, with his train of dogs, came to the Fort, and when told about the murder he was surprised that nobody had taken the trouble to bury the body. "What!" he said, "here's a fort full of white men and not one can be found to do this act of common charity. I will go myself and bury him." Of course, we would not let him go alone, so we brought the body to the fort and buried it just outside the graveyard. It took us sometime to collect the pieces. The hands and the feet and other portions of the body we found hung up on the trees near by. You must not think there was much of this sort of thing going on in those days. Although sometimes the Indians squabbled and fought among themselves, the Company never had any rows with them and on the whole got on very peaceably with their dusky friends. It was to the Factor's interest to conciliate the Indians so as to have their trade, but they did their best to drive the gold diggers out of the country. They would not buy their gold or sell them provisions, and the men, who worked all summer on the river bars, had to go to the plains

when winter came on for supplies. I must tell you of my first experience as a worker in gold. I had bought about $20 worth the previous autumn and one day I resolved to make a ring of it. I put it in a clay pipe and taking it to the blacksmith shop put the pipe in the fire to melt the gold. I had the bad luck to break my pipe and all the melted gold ran out and mixed with the coals and ashes. I gave up my gold for lost and when I saw Mr. Clover told him of my misfortune. He laughed at me and said, "I guess you don't know much about working gold. He told me to let the fire die out and he would show me how to recover my lost gold. With his help I got back every grain of it and my next attempt at goldsmithing was more successful, for I made my ring. And now my life with the Hudson's Bay Co. was drawing to an end. With the opening of spring my contract was to close.

When my term expired, Mr. Christie, the Chief Factor, asked me to re-engage, but I made up my mind to strike out for myself and refused his offer. After the boats pulled out for York I got ready to leave for a place of my own, but the very day I had resolved to depart the Rev. Mr. Wolsley arrived at Edmonton and I changed my plans. He was about to start a new mission at Smoky Lake and wanted a man to build a house for him. He offered me the job and I engaged with him at the rate of L4 or $19.20 a month and my grub. As I did not have to pay for my own flour and tea, this was better for me than remaining with the company. We bought a boat from the company and on the 20th of June '62 started on our trip down the

Saskatchewan. At Victoria we took carts and from there travelled north across country about sixty miles, arriving at last safely, at Smoky Lake, Of course I had my family with me but

very lonely for the country was a s desolate as a desert and the flies were a pest that almost drove us crazy. For a month I had no tobacco and that was worse than being short of grub. The only living breatures we saw that summer besides ourselves, were some Stoneys and Crees who came to beg. During the summer we lost our youngest child, a little girl. That, of course, was the worst of our troubles. About the first week in September, the Rev. George McDougal with his son, John, came from his mission to pay us a visit. That was my first meeting with Mr. McDougal, and when he was here last spring we had a long chat over old times at Smoky Lake.

(To be continued)

--balance of material not available. R.B.K.